# THE WAY TO THE PEACE AND SETTLEMENT OF THESE NATIONS,

(16.)

Fully discovered in two Letters, delivered to his late Highnesse the Lord Protector, and one to the present Parliament,

Wherein

The liberty of speaking (which every one desires for himself) is opposed against Antichrist, for the procuring of his downfall, who will not grant the same to others;

And now published

To awaken the publick spirits in *England*, and to raise up an universal Magistrate in Christendome, that can suffer all sorts of people, (of what Religion soever they are) in any one Countrey, as God (the great Magistrate) suffers the same in all Countreys of the world.

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Matth. 5. 15.

*Men do not light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

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By *Peter Cornelius, Van Zurick-Zee*, a lover of truth and peace.

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(116)

# To the High and Honourable Assembly of PARLIAMENT, representing the whole body of the Commonwealth of *England, Scotland, Ireland*, &c.

*Lords, and Gentlemen,*

HAving seen that Policy and Religion (which ought to be universall) was divided and severed into many Sects, my spirit was much troubled; and looking round about me, where to make a beginning to rectifie those evils, I found no better object in Christendome, then his late *Highnesse* the *Lord PROTECTOR*: whereupon I resolved for a while to leave my family and native Countrey, fearing if I should not manifest to the Magistrates in *England*, what was upon my spirit, that they (having much to do with other affairs) might (through the subtilty of the Clergy, as in other Nations) easily be deceived. Therefore making first my addresse to some of the Counsel, and so (by the favour of them) to his *Highness* (delivering the two following Letters and addresses to him) I was severall times heard by him with patience; doing my endeavour to preserve *England* from that great dishonour which hath befallen other Nations, by setting up in stead of the form, and

doctrine of Christ, the forms and factions of men. But being obstructed in my proceeding, through the unexpected death of his *Highness*, I was put to some stop, waiting for a better opportunity, and hearing, that your *Honours* were to assemble together upon the 27. of *January*, my spirit was revived, hoping that my design (for the peace, and welfare of these Nations) by that means (better than heretofore) might be accomplished. Whereupon I resolved to bring the business (formerly propounded to his *Highness*) to your Honour's Consideration, being perswaded in my heart, if You (who are now intrusted with the weighty affairs of these Nations) have fixed your eyes upon God, as the eyes of the good people in these and other Nations are fixed upon You, that the Proposals laid down in the two following Letters and Addresses, will have a great influence upon your hearts; especially if you consider and remember the notable words of *Solomon*, where he speaks to the Kings and Rulers of the earth, that a sharp judgment shall come upon them that are in high places; for mercy will soon pardon the meanest, but mighty men (not standing in the Counsel of God) shall be mightily tormented. Therefore give ear to him, you that rule the people, and glory in the multitude of Nations; for he shall try your works, and search out your Counsels: Set your selves as true servants of the Common wealth (in opposition to Antichrist) against all oppressors, that so they that seek with *Haman* to destroy and trample upon the innocent (contrary to their expectation) may be disap-

diſappointed. Let ſome courſe be taken, that all perſons may buy their eſtates free from Tithes, that thereby henceforth none in all your Dominions may be forced to pay Tithes to the Miniſters or others; for that hath been, and is ſtill the chief cauſe of perſecution, and diſcontent in theſe, and other Nations. Suffer by no means (you having reſpect to the Honour of Chriſt) that any Confeſſion of Faith be ſet upon the Throne, as equal with the holy Scripture; for Confeſſions are only to diſtinguiſh one Sect from another. Aſſiſt not with the ſword, or money of the Common-wealth any Sect, or perſon in particular, that you may not hinder the truth (which hath been long kept under) from manifeſting it ſelf by it's own power; for Magiſtrates (as Magiſtrates) have no permiſſion to favour any Sect, or perſon in particular, if any of them (being conſidered as a private perſon) will be a member of a particular Congregation, he hath his liberty, as well as others, and may honour the ſame with his preſence, with his tongue, with his pen, and with his own money; but not with the ſword or money of the Common-wealth: for the Magiſtrates (being choſen by the generality of the people) are to ſtand immoveable in the Centre, (as Moderators) between all Sects: They are in regard of their office, as treaſurers, who are intruſted with a ſumm of money to imploy the ſame, not for their own, or any ones private advantage in particular, but for the benefit of all thoſe that have intruſted them, if it were the Magiſtrates work to ſet up a Nationall Miniſtry according to their own will, then

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we ſhould be in danger to have as many religions, as there be ſeverall wayes of government in the world, and the Magiſtrates changing their opinion, the whole Nationall Miniſtry muſt alſo as often be changed: What is that then, but to do his own will, inſtead of the will of God, and to have his pleaſure upon the ſouls of men. It were better, and belongs eſpecially to your office, not to follow the traditions of men, but to examine and reform the Laws now in force, and to diſanull ſuch as are deſtructive and without mercy, contrary to the Law of Nature, and the revealed will of God: which ought to be in all ages, and in all Countreys, only our rule. It is alſo your Honours work and buſineſs, diligently to conſider what properly belongs to the office of a Magiſtrate, before you put the ſword, and power of theſe Nations into their hands: for through want of care in ſo weighty a matter, the whole Commonwealth is in danger (as in times paſt) to fall under the dominion of one particular Sect, whoſe Miniſters (to bring the common-people, and ſo the Magiſtrates, under their juriſdiction) are commonly infecting with their forms, not only the publick meeting-places, & the houſes of the poor, or hoſpitalls, but alſo the Schools (called Univerſities) which have by the ſubtilty of them in all countreys, almoſt loſt the name Univerſal, by being miſapplied to ſelf-ends and intereſts. Now to reform thoſe corruptions, it is neceſſary that the magiſtrates, (whoſe work it is to have an eye to the good of all) do expell out of thoſe publick houſes or Colledges (being builded with

with the money of the Common-wealth) all meer humane forms of Religion, that they may not longer make a trade and merchandize of the things of God; granting an equal liberty to all peaceable people (as being but reaſon) that ſuch as have ventured their lives and eſtates in the time of warres, ſhould in the time of peace enjoy a like liberty with others; which may ſoon be, if you ſeriouſly conſider the things all along propounded; not that I am come unto *England* to be your inſtructer, but to bring to your Honours remembrance thoſe very things, which have been upon your own hearts, in order to the eſtabliſhing of ſuch a generall liberty, as hath been for many years of late pretended unto; being the onely way wherein you may expect the bleſſing of God upon you, and your poſterity, againſt all oppreſſours, to the taking away of that ſhamefull reproach, that the Magiſtrates, and Miniſters in *England* have brought down the King and Biſhops, rather to ſucceed in their places, then to bring the people to peace and happineſſe. If the power (to defend the good againſt the evil) in all Contreys be ordained of God, *Romans* 13. then reaſon requires, that all ſorts of people of what Nations ſoever, being in one Countrey together, ſhould be protected, as well as if any of them ſeverally was in his own: which cannot be, except there be a good publick-minded, and godly Magiſtrate, that will ſuffer all ſorts of people (of what Religion ſoever they are) in one Countrey, as God (the great Magiſtrate) ſuffers the ſame in all Countreys of the world; which I expect firſt in *England*, and

and so from thence to break forth (as a light) to all other Countreys and Nations, as having long enough walked (as in the night) by the glimps of particular lights. It is time that the universall work of God (as the Sun) do out-shine all that is particular; to which end I implore the presence of the most high God, to be in your Assembly to guide and direct your hearts in all those things, that may be acceptable unto him, and most agreeable to his good will and pleasure.

*Your Honours, and all mens humble servant,*
Peter Cornelius, Van Zurick-zee.

*London the 24. of Jan.* 1659. Hollands *stile.*

Give ear to the poor, for the cry of them is exceeding great in these Nations.

Peter Cornelius, V. Z. (*together with some others lovers of the common good*) *to the Mighty, Potent, Farre-renowned* (*yet mortal*) *Lord* Oliver Cromwell, *Protector of* England, Scotland, and Ireland, &c. *For the promoting of good Government, wisheth long life, wisdome, and foreseeing Councellors of State, to the end, that his actions may tend, not onely to the convincing of all that envy him, but that also he may be a light, and an example to all Dominions, and Governments in the world.*

WOrthy, and (as I hope) favourable Lord, being come into *England* during the time of your free government, I have with much chearfulneſſe beheld the great freedome, which this Nation (ſince the putting down the authority of Biſhops) doth enjoy, which I hope by degrees, will more and more prevail in the world, to the taking away of all force upon Conſciences, that men may be led and governed by reaſon, as men, and not as beaſts, by compulſive power. And that thoſe who are (once delivered from the Antichriſtian Captivity, may not be taken Captive again by others; who, together with the great Antichriſt, ſeek their own greatneſſe; It is moſt highly neceſſary that the Example of Chriſt (to reconcile all into one) ſhould be followed; for thoſe that force the Conſcience, being not able to bring all under them by worldly power, do commonly manifeſt their own inclination to be void of Chriſtian love, and forbearance, by gathering into Sects and Schiſmes, ſo that beſides the great Antichriſt,

there are many little Antichrists, that endeavour to rise up. None of which, being able to endure any opposition, or gainsaying, do seek to gain, and draw a part of Christendome under their jurisdiction. On the contrary, the Lord Jesus Christ hath taken captivity captive: That is, put those to shame that held others Captive, by his Ascention into heaven, and gave gifts unto men, that they should not be led astray again. *viz.* he gave as means to salvation, Apostles, Profits, Evangelists, Pastours, and Teachers; whose doctrine alone, while it is yet through Gods mercy, as a measuring line or clue of thred in the world, we should set that on the Throne, treading under foot, all meer humane traditions, as Idolatry: That so all Christendome, being divided into divers Sects (as formerly the Jews were) a generall way of Church-meeting may be instituted, for the hearing of Gods word read unaltered and unsophisticated, leaving a freedome for all Sects, as well the one as the other to assert their own apprehensions and understandings upon the Lessons of their Master Christ, without being tyed to one anothers opinions.

For it belongs only to God and Christ to have dominion over Consciences, and to Magistrates to prevent any from exercising Lordship over the Consciences of others; in so doing they would be true maintainers and defendors of Liberty, when they use not their power against those that assert their own meanings, but against those that would compel others to be of their opinions. For this, *viz.* to deal equally in matters of Religion towards subjects, is

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not only good and pious, but is also the foundation of a good Government. Whereas otherwise, when one Sect shall be encouraged and commended to the Church, and the other excluded, then jealousie and envy will spoil all; so that the Magistrate in stead of being beloved, may often fear that their State will be undermined, and at length totally destroyed; especially, when that one party is become numerous, or do joyn with a forraign or homebred enemy. Wherefore, though they should want the fear of God, yet for their own peace-sake, they should give freedome to all: and the rather seeing thereby the noblest and best of understanding, are from all places invited and convened in: for whose wisedome sake (as of *Josephs* in Ægypt) without respect of persons, they ought to be suffered to come in by the Magistrate for the common good and welfare. So that there may not only be a refining in Civil, or Politick, but chiefly in spirituall matters. For as formerly amongst the Jews, (when men began to believe that the Priests under the Law could not erre, as to their Institutions and Traditions) Gods commands were made void or of no effect; After the same manner also, hath it been since the time of the Apostles in Christendome, that instead of the holy Scriptures only (having been confirmed by Miracles) which should be held a rule of Faith; yet some (being lovers of themselves) have taken upon them a dominion, jointly with Christ, giving out, that men must believe and hold for truth, what ever the Church, (viz. the Bishops, or other superintendents thereof) do declare

as truth. The Common people not perceiving (by reason of the great respect which they bear to those that are set over them) that some of them seek to make themselves great, they have soon attempted to hold forth the authority of the Scriptures, according to their own sense; upon which when they have introduced matters contrary to reason, and people have refused to receive them for authentick, they have by their acquired authority hindred the people, from so much as to speak or whisper against it; constraining them to believe what they say, and also to rely upon them and their absolution: and to take away all scruple from the people, have given out that they will answer for them at the day of judgement; Yea moreover (which is farre more terrible) will undertake to pawn their souls for theirs. By which perswasions, the people being in anxiety fall into their bosomes, as in former times, in their grosse darknesse, oppugning the holy Scriptures and the consciences of some, with greater earnestnesse, are resisted and rejected. Yet these men being driven out by Tyranny, and separated from Popery, have commonly something of that sower leaven remaining in them, to bind others to their opinions, making, as a foundation of their fellowship, new forms, over and besides the holy Scriptures: whereby they have not exalted Christ but themselves: they have not held close to that only name, which was given for men to be saved by; but many names, as heads of parties (according to the different forms) they have brought into the world. Whence great strangenesse, making

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of parties, yea, ſometimes war, and horrible bloodſheddings have enſued: which have been managed, not for the ſake of the holy Scriptures, (which they all held for truth) but to keep up their own opinions: till again, ſome more underſtanding men perceiving the various differences of the forms and wayes, and the miſchief and wicked diſturbance, which this ſtrife and variance, in writings of diſputations & controverſie hath produced; have juſtly rejected all names and rules, beſides the name and rule of Jeſus Chriſt, living among them, as men full of love and forbearance; whoſe underſtandings and life, clash not againſt the holy Scriptures and ſound reaſon: although they differ among themſelves in apprehenſions upon ſome places of the Scripture, but do continue in brotherly love and unity; by which forbearance they do not only ſet others in the right way (ſo farre as they are in the truth) but are alſo by others brought out of the way, wherein they themſelves did erre: a thing which ought to bear ſway with all men, according to the words of Chriſt (*As you would that men ſhould do unto you, ſo do you unto them alſo*) that they ſhould bear with one anothers opinions and conceptions, as they would themſelves be born withall in theirs. For it hath more the reſemblance and appearance of compelling the Conſciences, and of Tyranny, then of Reaſon, to preſs any one to come up to anothers apprehenſion, as neceſſary, before he can apprehend it with his own underſtanding to be good and neceſſary.

This hath been in former ages the policy of Perſecutors,

ſecutors, and makers of Sects and Schiſmes; who not only have caſt out by their power, ſuch, whoſe underſtanding they could not bring to agree with theirs: but being unable to do it, have made great broyls, rents, and diviſions in the world; whereas every one (ſince God is ſo long ſuffering) ought with conſtant perſevering love (without deſpairing in the work) to labour according to their power to enlighten others, that are in darkneſſe. For if thoſe that have the light reject others, or depart from them; then the blind having no good leaders, muſt needs go aſtray, and being led by the blind fall into a deep abyſſe of Ignorance. On the contrary, all true lovers of the common good, do labour not only to take out of the world Factions, but alſo all humane inventions (as much as in them lieth) that ſo the Lord Jeſus may alone remain Lord and Maſter; whoſe ſaying they bear great honour and reſpect unto, although they poſſibly cannot underſtand the meaning of ſome particulars; yet being confirmed by ſignes and wonders, do hold the ſame for good and true. In which thing as to the ſalvation of man, they will put no truſt or affiance in any beſides Jeſus Chriſt; nor yet receive any thing as truth, but that which they themſelves can apprehend to be good and agreeable to his doctrine; therefore do they themſelves not ſet up or own any authority, whereby men ſhould rely upon it, nor yet ſhould give any others Authority whereby to draw men into their party, but ſhould bind all men unto Jeſus Chriſt, whom they acknowledge only for Head and Saviour.

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We deſire from the bottome of our hearts, that all men might be gathered together under that one name, and that your Highneſs (from whom almoſt every one expects ſome ſpeciall work) will help to cleanſe the Chriſtian Religion, and worſhip of God, from all prevailing exorbitances; and to that end would inſtitute (as an eternall memoriall and example to all Dominions and Governments in the world) in every City and in every County throughout *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, one generall Chriſtian aſſembling or meeting-place, in ſuch a form, that all people may ſee one another round about by the help of ſeats, riſing by ſteps, having before them convenient learning-places to read and write upon; alſo one deſk aloft on one ſide or end, to hear the holy Scriptures read at a ſet time, giving freedome after that reading, to all people, orderly to confer together, concerning the Doctrine and Inſtruction of their Lord and Maſter Chriſt: That all Lording over Conſciences being prevented, all people might come together, without receiving any obſtruction by any humane forms or contrivances, even as the Jews being divided into ſeveral Sects (as *Phariſes*, *Sadnees*, *Eſſeens*, and *Herodians*, &c.) met together in one Temple, ſo we would not deny any particular Congregations of their freedome, of peaceable meeting among themſelves about the Ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt (as the Orders or Synagogues of the Jews were not at all infringed) nor bereaved the Miniſters or Teachers of their benefit, which they do receive of their own people for their maintainance: for they having

having a fit opportunity, may the better bring in their ſenſe with others, into this generall Church-meeting. That ſo the truth getting enlargement, the honeſt party may be reſolved into unity, and the bad (that cannot indure the light) may be diſcovered, and made known; who onely ſeeking Dominion and rule, ſhould not by any means be imployed in high places, in matters civil or ſpirituall; that ſo the ſeat of Government may not be uſurped by their Adherents, when things go contrary to their minds (being cruell Wolves) who in ſeeking of their advantage, will not ſpare the flock, over which the Rulers (who ſhould be placed to keep the people in order) ought eſpecially to take care, that they do not hinder them from the liberty of ſpeaking freely; as it happeneth commonly in particular Aſſemblies or Congregations, contrary to the laudable practice of the Jews, *Act.* 13.15. who themſelves, after the reading of the Scriptures, did invite and ſtir up *Paul* and *Barnabas* (being ſtrangers) to ſpeak. Hence (when underſtandings might be ſo free and uninterrupted) there would not onely ariſe a clearing of the underſtanding, and reforming of the lives of people; but alſo a yielding, ſubmiſſive, condeſcending love: for the wiſeſt and experteſt men daily coming thus together, to teach and to be taught; it would incline the hearts of thoſe that ſhould behold them, one towards another, which we may diſcern in worldly matters, (as in making of Treaties or Peace with Nations) whereas otherwiſe they being drawn up, and ſtretched beyond their preſent apprehenſions, by

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the ſupream Authority, they ſtand upon their guard in oppoſition to one another, as well in ſpiritual as Civil affairs. This now being ſo, it will eſpecially concern your Highneſs, whilſt the eyes of all are fixed upon you, to ſet a compleat Example, that all people (*that do ſlander you as to have no Religion*) may evidently perceive, that you do only maintain the Chriſtian Religion, and not Countenance any other particular name or Head whatſoever. For Jeſus, the only heavenly Teacher, (who hath been long enough trod under foot by Sectarians) ought to be ſet up above all; and that all men as Brethren be joyned together, is the onely way to abolliſh all Lord ng over Conſciences; which hath already driven him out of his ſeat, and many hundred years ſince poſſeſſed his place, that at length the ſpirituall uſurpation, with its Antichriſtian Dominion, may be laid down at his feet.

Thus doing you will be accounted a follower of the example of the good King *Joſiah*, 2 *Kings* 23. who to reform the Jews worſhip of God, threw down all *Chimerims*-------and Idolatry, and brought forth the book of the old Covenant, to the ears of the people; and all the people ſtood in that Covenant. So will all Chriſtendome (unleſſe any would ſet up man to rule together with Chriſt) commend your diligent and wiſe forecaſt, and circumſpection, and pray for the proſperity of your eſtate, to the ruine of the Romiſh Seat, which (together with all that would force Conſciences) hearing the report of this noble Free-

dome, will begin to tremble, yea, even their silenced children, whose mouths have been muzzled by compulsive restraint, will begin to speak; and so in time of need, seeing your Free Government, may come to shrowd themselves under your wings. To which, God the Father, who beholdeth you, and all Mens actions, afford his grace, through Jesus Christ,

Amen.

# To his Highneſs Oliver Lord Protectour, of England, Scotland, and Ireland, &c.

MIghty, and (as I hope) prudent Lord, being by the Loadſtone of your free Government drawn to come into *England*, I have not only beheld the multiplicity of Opinions, and various differences of Sects (who have been long held together in a falſe peace) but alſo have laid before you an expedient (in my Letter of the 24. of *June*) to bring them together to a true reall unity.

I hope (ſeeing the bonds of Antichriſt are in a great meaſure broken in *England* by the effuſion of much blood,) that you as a skilfull Pilot, will keep your hand at the Helm, and your eye upon the ſail, that ſo the little Antichriſts, who ſeek to rule over Conſciences, may not bring your work to ſhame and reproach, by exciting you to Tyranny, and thereby obſtruct you in perfecting the ſame. For ſeverall Princes and Magiſtrates have formerly laboured to bring down Antichriſt; but not rightly knowing the nature thereof, have (unawares) not obſerved the little ones, while they oppoſe the great ones only, as Biſhops and others; and the little, ſelf-ſeeking ones to become great, have to their power helped the Magiſtracy (as if themſelves were Enemies of the ſpirituall domination) only that they might ſuc-

ceed on the others places, which evidently appeared as ſoon as ever they began to take breath; In that they have inſtituted new forms (the cauſe of Sects and parties) by framing new Articles of faith, over and beſides the holy Scripture, thereby to ſhut men up within the Park or Incloſure of their own opinions; by which means they ſet not up Chriſt in the hearts of men, but their own Kingdome and Dominion, which is Idolatry. And the Rulers being brought on their ſide, oppreſſion hath been exerciſed upon ſuch as have not worſhipped their Images (I mean their contrived Forms) without life.

Now to oppoſe theſe deceitfull ſpirits, who in an Angelicall humility and lowlineſſe, come with great and lamentable complaints and petitions. The good Magiſtrates, to the end they be not deceived, ſhould, for the protecting of the Innocent, be armed with a Divine foreſightfulneſſe, and circumſpection; for they by all means (as if the Magiſtrates could make their dead Forms live) do inceſſantly implore the interpoſing their Authority, well knowing, that there is no better way, to bring the Common people (wherein the ſtrength of a Nation conſiſts) under their juriſdiction, and do ſometimes ſet the Magiſtracy (which to govern well cannot be too high) by degrees higher and higher; yea upon hopes thereby to have their Forms ſubſcribed unto) reſolve to make any body their King or Emperour; being well aſſured, that when he hath thus given up his power to them, and ſet them on the Throne, they may afterwards do with him what they will.

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For the moſt part all Kings have loſt their power, by giving too much Authority to the Miniſtry or Teachers, and have become (inſtead of Lords) ſervants; yea (fearing the oppoſition of them and their followers) have for their ſakes become Tyrants.

Conſidering theſe things, the Magiſtrates to whom (and not to the Teachers) the ſword is given, for the protection of the good, ſhould hold it faſt, to prevent and fruſtrate all cunning and ſubtil practices, and inſtead of giving Miniſters or Teachers power and Authority, ſhould (by their generall Aſſemblies ſet up in all Cities and Countries) draw the common people out of their boſomes and dominion, that they may looſe their uſurped power, that ſo the ſword may return into its right place, for which God hath ordained it, without the Magiſtrates needing in their Government, to have dependance on the Miniſters or Teachers, who are wont to incenſe the people againſt them. This (beſides that the whole power will come into the hands of the Magiſtrates) will bring many thouſands a year to the Commonwealth. For the people having opportunity to come into the generall Aſſemblies, out of loue to hear many wiſe underſtanding men, will not need to give maintainance to the hirelings, who Lord it in particular Congregations, whereby the Magiſtrates (who now begin to lighten or eaſe the burthen of maintainance) will be loved more then formerly. Then ſhall we firſt be able rightly to diſcern, when the power is come into its right place, what the Magiſtrates are, who now many times are accompted oppreſſours, and evil governours: though it may be that oppreſſion & e-

vil government doth proceed more from the nature of the Teachers, then of the Magistrates, who (now the way to make the Teachers power-lesse is opened) will begin to appear more evidently then formerly, and the more, because the common assembling-place may be instituted for drawing off the people from the Ministers in all places, without compulsion of any man, bringing all Sects (without giving wages to any) as brethren to equall privileges. But if those that are of one and the same opinion, will have particular Congregations, and Set-ministers, let themselves pay them as a Master doth his servant. For its no reason that a man should help to maintain anothers servants; especially, if they be such as (in his judgement) are soul-destroyers; who (being in his senses) would assist such enemies as do countermine him? Is it not to be wondred at, that the Ministers (who would be esteemed more then the Magistrates) should (to the shame of their Church or Congregations) desire wages of them, for whom they have not laboured? Neither is it the mark of a true Church, where the Members thereof are so covetous, and unmercifull, that they will not maintain or provide for their own Ministers; and the Teachers (loving the wages of unrighteousnesse) do (contrary to the 10th. Commandement) covet the goods of others; whereof the Apostles and their Congregations, would have been ashamed to think, much lesse would do it. Yet I hope, that once the Conscience-burthening-law of constraining to pay Tithes to the Ministers (who seek rather after Lucre then the Truth)

Tithe) for the reſt of theſe Nations, will be made null and void. Some courſe being taken to ſupply the neceſſities of the Miniſters, who by ſuch Act (that none ſhall be forced to pay Tithes to them) may be brought to a want of a ſubſiſtance; and yet that this may be ſo done, only for thoſe that are now made deſtitute, but no encouragement for any others in time to come. And by this the Magiſtrates (while every Sect maintain their own Miniſters) will be freed from laying ſuch intollerable burthens on their Subjects, having to provide for none elſe, but thoſe, who are appointed in the generall Aſſemblies or meeting-places, to read the holy Scriptures, and keep the people in order; to ſhew that they are no maintainers of Sects, but of the Chriſtian Religion; being as Fathers and Mediators, to bring the good together, out of all Sects, to unite under the name of Jeſus, to the end that his Kingdome and Government may be enlarged, for an example to *Holland*, *Denmark*, *Sweden*, *France*, and other Kingdomes, who ſeeing there is no force nor conſtraint uſed, will eaſily be brought to a firm bond of Unity. This being the only means by forſaking all Men, and humane Forms, to be bleſſed by Chriſt (whoſe honour only is ſought) againſt the Antichriſt, contrary to the way of other Kings and Princes, who being ſeparated from Popery, have made themſelves unworthy of the bleſſing of Chriſt, by giving honour to the bare name of *Luther*, *Calvin*, and others, inſtead of giving it to Chriſt, having been deceived by the little Antichriſts their followers; who aſwell as the great one, ſeek

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their own glory, eaſe, and idleneſſe; and as if they had no fellowſhip with the great Antichriſt, have put the holy Scriptures into the common-peoples hands, which before was prohibited to be read, only ſeeking that we ſhould agree with them in their Forms, applying and fitting themſelves (ſuch is their ſubtilties) to the temper of the times: as a Fowler gives ſcope to a bird he hath already in a ſtring, that for a [illegible] length it may be content to live in a Cage. Now, againſt theſe little Antichriſts, (who under the name of giving liberty, would bind people to their opinions) the Magiſtrates (being taught by experience) ſhould alwell counter-work, as againſt the great, that they may come to the very root, bringing the holy Scripture (which was formerly prohibited to be read) with great Triumph into the generall Aſſembly or meeting-place, and ſet it on high, to the end that the ſound or report of this, to wit, that Chriſt alone muſt rule (by his word) in the hearts of men, among all Nations (according to the great work done in *England*) may be heard, giving liberty to every one, after the reading of the Scripture (contrary to the little Antichriſt, who will have it underſtood only according to their own Forms and Expoſitions) to ſet forth his own apprehenſion, without being bound to any ones opinion: That ſpirituall matters being applyed to ſpirituall, Antichriſt may be ſtormed with two Armies, *viz.* the Truth againſt Errour, and the materiall ſword againſt oppreſſours, who by their arrogating diſpoſition and excluſion of others, do ſeek to reſtrain the liberty of ſpeaking, which

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which discovers the errours of the understanding for the cure thereof. Whereas, by stopping the mouths of people (as heretofore) they make men incureable.

Now to further this, that the weaknesse or Ignorance of some may be remedied by the knowledge of others, without disturbance or Confusion, it will be necessary that the Authority of the Magistrate interpose in this generall Assembly or meeting place, that every one may speak in their order, staying their time, and those that brush order, may (after due warning) be ejected, till they are better disposed, without oppressing them by Imprisonment or otherwise.

This would be glad tiding, yea, a true year of Jubilee, for those that lie in prison, only for asserting their opinions in matters of Religion; that now they may (together with others) bring in their understandings into this generall Assembly, to receive or give light. And to the end, that Antichrist (or he that exalts himself above others) may be continually shut out, it is exactly to be observed, that no prehemenence or sole priviledge be granted to any, (of offering any things, or of speaking first) that so every one being at liberty and unhindered, may bring forth that which is most conducing to the Common welfare, according to the words of *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 14. 26. All of them sitting still, so long after the reading of the Scriptures (as being swift to hear and slow to speak) till any one think it fit (in his judicious and humble mind) to propose somewhat for mutuall edification; endeavouring withall to make his

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discourse direct, that another may have his turn likewise, contrary to the custome of the common Teachers, who only, or solely speaking, do lengthen out their discourse, to the weariness of their Auditory; for which end the Moderators (who ought to be meet and understanding men) are to observe that there be this order kept.

This (seeing no Forms or Articles are made in it besides the holy Scripture) will be a Counsel and Synod, standing always open, to all rationall people, without imposing any more conclusions, contrary to the former Assemblies, who have excluded all Nations and Posterity (by their self conceitedness) dividing people, as by a wall of separation, one from another, by their Forms; whereupon great estrangement hath insued, as if they were differentiations. And the better to set up their Antichristian Kingdome and dominion, have so contrived their Catechismes, that they have bound up, and so spoyled the understanding of their children, before they come to have the use of Reason, holding their dependants or Members, captive under them in their Net, as beasts, contrary to the order of their Creation: well knowing, that if they gave them the liberty of speaking, they would not be long worshipped as Idols, or sacrificed to, as Bell at Babel.

Contrariwise, people, in the generall Assemblies, when all understandings and tongues are free, will be stirred up to the exercise thereof, and by conferring together, will come to knowledge, love, and familiarity. The truth (which hath been long kept under

or with held in unrighteousness) will scatter the lies, as light doth darkness, and the great credit, which we have given to some Teachers in particular, will by opposition be diminished, and the power of all Sects, (the one dispelling the Errors of the other) will be broken.

This will be the place, where we shall discern and learn to know the truly wise as *Solomon*, and meek as *Moses*; which out of all Sects (only such as seek to domineer over others excluded) may be appointed as Councellors, to keep steady the ballance of Government, without respect of persons, to the end, that the Spirit of God be not confined; which will be a sure mark, that Wisdome (for the sake of which Kings in times past were blessed) is (under this Government esteemed above gold and silver; being the principall to distinguish all things, chiefly Policy from Religion, for the common good: For Magistrates (if they would remain without usurping the Office of Christ) may not make Laws in matters of Religion, but against evil deeds, to protect the good: To the end, that their Subjects (from whom they receive Taxes and Impositions) may be protected in peace, of what Religion soever they are: For the power to punish evil-doers, is ordained of God in all Lands, without respect of Religion, and whosoever opposeth that power, opposeth the Ordinance of God; not that all Officers (though they rule ill) are of God, or are his Ministers, but those only, who administer their Office rightly, according to Gods will: Otherwise, those who heretofore have risen

up against Tyrants, opposing their persons, should have been indeed opposers of Gods Ordinance; contrary to that of the Apostle, Rom. 13. who hath said, that such as are continually imployed in the defence of the good, are the Ministers of God, untill they have by false Teachers, been drawn besides their Office, to domineer over Consciences, and so brought into the service or Ministry of Satan, to the grief of their Subjects.

But I hope, that once the sword (which hath been with-held from lyers and oppressors) shall cut them off, together with the Cable of their hope (the Tithes) that so the ground of almost all oppression, being taken away, not only the Subjects, but also the Magistrates, may live in peace; who are now continually liable to hear the complaints of the head Sectaries, who seek to domineer over others, it being the nature of such, who finding their own weakness, do make power and force their refuge, contrary to the example of Christ and the Primitive Saints, whose strength was only the evidence of truth. Wherefore all people, and chiefly Magistrates, are to take heed that they assist not lies, using their power (according to Gods Ordinance) only against those that are to the prejudice of good Government, or the hurt of mankind in generall, without mingling Pollicy and Religion, which were ordained for severall ends; the one to defend the good men against the evil, and the other to make the evil good. There remains only, that the Magistrates (for an example to their Subjects) do null all humane commanding

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and constraining Laws in spirituall matters, that so all plants which the heavenly Father hath not planted, may (according to the saying of Christ) be rooted up, which will best take effect, when the dominion of the Teachers, is through the power of the Governours, come to an end, and their hope of domineering over others cut off. For Magistrates, in stead of lording it over Consciences, ought on the contrary to hinder all Lordship over Consciences, that complaining and murmuring may come to an end, and that the righteous may rejoyce.

For which end, that we may transmit the World unto our posterity, in a better condition then we first found it, I have contributed this little to my power.

I beseech your Highness, let not any preingagement oblige you, to what you may afterwards see inconsistant with the Magistrates true interest, with the due liberty of Gods people, and the free propagation of the Gospel. It were better for you and more for your Honour, with *Ahashuerus*, to contradict your own hand and Seal, then with *Herod*, to perform a rash engagement.

But while it is yet in your Highnesse choice, let not the right hand of brave Atchievments for the vindication of liberty be ever stained with authorizing (to the honour of men, and dishonour of Christ) any Confession of Faith, Ordinance, or Decree; which will in the least intrench thereon, or indulge the enemies thereof. Be not deceived, by such persons as pretend to advance your Honour, as in the time of

*Daniel*

*Daniel* was done to King *Darius*, that the good people in those and other Nations, may not be disappointed of their hope and expectations in you.

I do wish for conclusion, that your Highnesse, and all your Councellors of State, to the bringing down of Antichrist, and all his Adherents, may have a great heart, and humble under God and Christ. That the great work done in *England*, come not to the Honour of a mortal man, but to the honour of him, who hath received the power over the Kingdomes of the earth.

*Be wise as Serpents, and innocent as Doves*, Matth. 10. 16.

*O Lord of all Lords, and Magistrates, teach them that rule as Gods in the world, to consider, that they are but men in thy eyes: That they may handle their Subjects after such a manner, as they wish to be handled by thee in thy judgement.*

# FINIS.